

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-6 and 11-13 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-3 and 7-10 and 14 are active in the application.

Claims 1-3, 7-10 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. In addition, Claims 1-3 and 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over any one of the U.S. patents to Mori et al and Takeda, taken in view of Ito et al. Additionally, dependent Claims 7 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over the above references plus Eisenhardt and Molander.

Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Verbitsky for the courtesy of an interview on October 30, 2003 at which time the outstanding rejections were discussed. Specifically, Applicant proposed amending the claim preambles to reflect the abnormality detection now recited in the claims. Applicant also pointed out that the cited prior art, including Ito et al, did not teach detecting an abnormality based on temperature estimates of an object *using two separate methods*. Based upon this discussion, it was agreed that the amended claims define over the prior art of record and overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

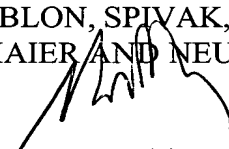
Since Claim 1 remains generic to all of the embodiments, it is respectfully requested that the non-elected claims 4-6 and 11-13 be included in any patent issuing from the present application.

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Applicant therefore believes that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicits an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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